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# Don Most

**Donny Most** (born August 8, 1953) is an American actor and singer, best known for his role as Ralph Malph on the television series *Happy Days*.

## Early life

Most was born to a Jewish family[1] in Brooklyn, New York City. He lived in Flatbush, Brooklyn, New York, and graduated from Erasmus Hall High School in 1970. He attended Lehigh University for three years from 1970 to 1973, but did not graduate. Originally intending to study engineering, he changed his major to business after his first semester. He made plans during his junior year to spend the summer of 1973 in search of acting jobs in Hollywood before completing his studies at Lehigh. Instead, he landed the Ralph Malph role on his third audition and moved to California to pursue acting full-time.[2][3]

## Career

### Acting credits

Most appeared on the 113th and final filmed but never aired episode of *Room 222*, entitled "Jason and Big Mo", in the role of Louie, the red-headed class wisecracker. David Jolliffe had handled the role of Bernie, the red-headed class wisecracker, for all prior appearances. *Room 222* aired for the last time in January 1974, just as *Happy Days* began, and on the same network, ABC.

Most played jokester Ralph on *Happy Days*, regularly appearing up until the show's seventh season and returned in the final season as a guest star. During the first season Most was more of a secondary character, billed only in the end credits, but by the second season he was front billed, as a primary character. Most has appeared in other film and television work. Film credits include *Leo and Loree* (1980), *EDtv* (1999), *Planting Melvin* (2005), and *The Great Buck Howard* (2008). He also made the regular round of guest appearances on TV shows like *Emergency!*, *CHiPs*, *Baywatch*, *The Love Boat*, *Sliders*, *Star Trek: Voyager*, *Diagnosis: Murder*, *Yes, Dear*, and *Glee*. He also made an

**Donny Most**

Most as Ralph Malph in 1974

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|---|---|
| **Born** | August 8, 1953<br>Brooklyn, New York, U.S. |
| **Education** | Erasmus Hall High School |
| **Alma mater** | Lehigh University (did not complete) |
| **Occupation(s)** | Actor, singer |
| **Years active** | 1973–present |
| **Known for** | Happy Days · The Fonz and the Happy Days Gang · Dungeons & Dragons · Leo and Loree |
| **Spouse** | Morgan Hart (m. 1982) |
| **Children** | 2 |
| **Website** | realdonnymost.com (http://realdonnymost.com) |

appearance on *Charles in Charge*, alongside his former *Happy Days* co-star, Scott Baio. He plays a man who has just won the lottery and, as part of the cameo joke, he runs up to Baio and waving the winning ticket shouts, "It looks like happy days are here again!" (He also receives several looks from Baio that suggests familiarity throughout the episode.) He is sometimes credited as "Donny Most."

Most has also made stage appearances in plays like *The Sunshine Boys* with Robert Wuhl at Judson Theatre Company in 2017 [4] and *Middletown* at Bucks County Playhouse in 2019.[5]

Most performed as a voice actor on several Saturday morning cartoon series. Among these roles were: Ralph Malph on *The Fonz and the Happy Days Gang* (1980); Eric the Cavalier in *Dungeons & Dragons* (1983); and Stiles on *Teen Wolf* (1986–1989). Most had a cameo as himself in the fifth season *Family Guy* episode "It Takes a Village Idiot, and I Married One" in 2007.

### Music career

United Artists released Most's only pop album, *Donny Most*, in the fall of 1976; it did not chart. A single from the album, "All Roads (Lead Back to You)" b/w "Better to Forget Her" (aided by Most performing it on an episode of *Happy Days*) spent three weeks on the Billboard Hot 100 in December 1976, peaking at #97; a second single, "One of These Days", was released as a promo to record stations only. Most released two other pop singles, "Here's Some Love" b/w "I'm Gonna Love Loving You" on the Venture label in 1978 and "I Only Want What's Mine", from the soundtrack of the film *Leo and Loree* (which starred Most and occasional *Happy Days* co-star Linda Purl) on Casablanca Records in 1980; neither record charted.

Most also performed vocals in several episodes of *Happy Days*, where Ralph was part of a band with Potsie Weber (Anson Williams) and Richie Cunningham (Ron Howard), and later Chachi Arcola (Scott Baio). Although Most primarily sang backup vocals (with Williams handling lead), he did sing solo on several occasions, most notably the episodes "They Shoot Fonzies, Don't They" and "Be My Valentine."

As of 2016, Most has switched to swing music, and released a Christmas CD, *Swinging Down The Chimney Tonight* on Summit Records; as of 2017, he was touring the U.S. in a show called "Donny Most Sings and Swings", performing a set of 1950s songs with a seven-piece backing band.[6]

The songs "Ooo Baby Baby" and "Smoke from a Distant Fire" were released in 2021, with plans to release a new, full length album sometime in the near future, with "New York High" following in 2023.

## Personal life

Most married actress Morgan Hart (daughter of burlesque queen Margaret Hart Ferraro) in 1982. They have two daughters and live near Los Angeles, California.[7]

### *Happy Days* lawsuit

On April 19, 2011, Most and four of his *Happy Days* co-stars, Erin Moran, Marion Ross, Anson Williams and the estate of Tom Bosley, who died in 2010, filed a $10 million breach-of-contract lawsuit against CBS, which owns the show, claiming they had not been paid for merchandising revenues owed under their contracts. The cast members claimed they had not received revenues from show-related items, including comic books, T-shirts, scrapbooks, trading cards, games, lunch boxes, dolls, toy cars, magnets, greeting cards, and DVDs where their images appear on the box covers. Under their contracts, they were supposed to be paid five percent from the net proceeds of merchandising if their sole image were used, and half that amount if they were in a group. CBS said it owed the actors $8,500 and $9,000 each, most of it from slot

machine revenues, but the group said they were owed millions. The lawsuit was initiated after Ross was informed by a friend playing slots at a casino of a "Happy Days" machine on which players win the jackpot when five Marion Rosses are rolled.[8]

In October 2011, a judge rejected the group's fraud claim, which meant they could not receive millions of dollars in potential damages.[9] On June 5, 2012, a judge denied a motion filed by CBS to have the case thrown out, which meant it would go to trial on July 17 if the matter was not settled by then.[10] In July 2012, the actors settled their lawsuit with CBS. Each received a payment of $65,000 and a promise by CBS to continue honoring the terms of their contracts.[11][12]

# Filmography

## Film

| Year | Title | Role | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1975 | *Crazy Mama* | Shawn (as Donn Most) | action comedy film |
| 1980 | *Leo and Loree* | Leo | romance comedy film |
| 1986 | *Stewardess School* | George Bunkle (as Donald Most) | action comedy film |
| 1993 | *Acting on Impulse* | Leroy | |

## Television

| Year | Title | Role | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1973 | *Emergency!* | Fred Wilson (as Donny Most) | Episode: "Computer Error" |
| 1974 | *Police Story* | Arthur Kane (as Donny Most) | Episode: "Explosion" |
| | *Room 222* | Louie (as Donny Most) | Episode: "Jason and Big Mo" |
| 1975 | *Huckleberry* | Tom Sawyer (as Donny Most) | Television film |
| 1976 | *Petrocelli* | Will Johnson (as Donny Most) | Episode: "The Pay Off" |
| 1978 | *With This Ring* | James Cutler (as Donny Most) | Television film |
| | *ABC Weekend Specials* | Henry Cooper | Episode: "The $100,000 Bill" |
| 1979 | *Greatest Heroes of the Bible* | Daniel (as Donny Most) | Episode: "Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar" |
| | *Angie* | Coffee shop customer (uncredited) | Episode: "The Adjustment" |
| 1981 | *Aloha Paradise* | Lurp (as Donny Most) | Episode: "Sydney's Old Flame / Everett and The Wolf / Lurp's in Love |
| 1980-1981 | *The Fonz and the Happy Days Gang* | Ralph Malph (voice) | Episode: "King for a Day<br>Episode: "May the Farce Be with You" |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Episode: "Arabian Knights"<br>Episode: "Bye Bye Blackbeard"<br>Episode: "Westward Whoa!"<br>Episode: Ming Fu to You, Too!"<br>Episode: "The Vampire Strikes Back"<br>Episode: "You'll Never Get Witch"<br>Episode: "The 20,000 Drachma Pyramid"<br>Episode: "It's a Jungle Out There"<br>Episode: "Gone with the Wand"<br>Episode: "Science Fiction"<br>Episode: "Greece Is the Word"<br>Episode: "The French Correction"<br>Episode: "Kelp!"<br>Episode: Time Schlep"<br>Episode: "It's All Downhill from Here"<br>Episode: "Double Jeopardy"<br>Episode: "Fjords and Sorcery"<br>Episode: "There's No Place Like Rome"<br>Episode: "Perilous Pauline"<br>Episode: "Around the World in 80 Ways"<br>Episode: "All This and Timbuktu"<br>Episode: "Give Me a Hand - Something's Afoot" |
| 1981-1982 | *Fantasy Island* | Kermit Dobbs<br>Todd Porter, Billy Williams | Episode: "The Artist and the Lady / Elizabeth's Baby<br>Episode: "King Arthur in Mr. Roarke's Court / Shadow Games" |
| 1982 | *CHiPs* | Moloch (as Donald Most) | Episode: "Rock Devil Rock" |
| 1979-1983 | *The Love Boat* | Marv Prine (as Donny Most)<br><br><br><br><br>Keith Kelly (as Donald Most) | Episode: "Alaska Wedding Cruise: Buddy and Portia's Story / Julie's Story / Carol and Doug's Story / Peter and Alicia's Story: Part 1"<br>Episode: "Alaska Wedding Cruise: Buddy and Portia's Story / Julie's Story / Carol and Doug's Story / Peter and Alicia's Story: Part 2"<br>Episode: "The Family Plan / The Promoter / May the Best Man Win / Forever Engaged / The Judges: Part 1"<br>Episode: "The Family Plan / The Promoter / May the Best Man Win / Forever Engaged / The Judges: Part 2"<br>Episode: "The Zinging Valentine / The Very Temporary Secretary / Final Score" |
| 1974-1983 | *Happy Days* | Ralph Malph (as Donny Most) | 167 episodes |

# Awards and nominations

| Year | Association | Category | Nominated work | Result |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1999 | Marco Island Film Festival | Scarlett Award | | Won |
| 2007 | Newport Beach Film Festival Achievement Award | Director | *Moola* | Won |
| 2019 | EQUUS Film Festival | Best Picture | *MBF: Man's Best Friend* | Won |
| 2021 | International Christian Film Festival | Best Supporting Actor: Feature Film | *Lost Heart* | Won |
| 2021 | *ICVM Crown Awards* | Best of Festival | *MBF: Man's Best Friend* | Nominated |
| | | Best Narrative under 250k | | Won |

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# External links

- Don Most (https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0609182/) at IMDb

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